

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. in Plenary Hall at the Duma. In his remarks, he referred to President Vladimir Putin and former President

Boris Yeltsin of Russia. The President also referred to OSCE, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One

June 5, 2000

Sightseeing

The President. Did you guys go see Lenin?

Q. We tried; we couldn't get in.

The President. I'll tell you something, if you've never been to Kiev and you have time while we're there—if you don't all have to cover me all the time, when we're just having meetings and stuff—you should go to the monastery, all these beautiful buildings where they have all the historical treasures of Ukraine, all these—these metal artifacts going back over 1,000 years, fabulous stuff—2,000, 3,000 years.

And underground—they have this underground network of tunnels that the priests still run. And the tunnels are perfectly preserved atmospherically, and there are mummies there where the priests have been buried for 500, 600, 700 years, and they're like that, and you can see the skin on their hands, just like Lenin, except not treated. No, no, they were just buried there. It is the most astonishing thing.

Remember how that Peruvian—wasn't it a Peruvian girl—looked when they found her after 500 years in the ice?

Q. Yes.

The President. That's the way the atmosphere is. And you're walking through these tunnels, and you just come up and there's a little grave. They just cut a thing into the tunnel and they lay the priests there. I mean, there they are. It is the most astonishing thing. Who did it? Weren't you amazed? Weren't they all buried 500, 600, 700 years ago?

Q. Yes.

The President. And you hold the little candle down there. And the atmosphere is stunning. But like a group of you, if you can, whatever, swap off—because a lot of this stuff is just meetings, until we do the rally; there's no press conference or anything—as many of you as can be spared. There is nothing like it anywhere else in the world that I'm aware of.

Q. Would you write a note for our bosses? [Laughter]

Former President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

The President. Yes, I'll give you an excused absence. But no kidding, if there is any way any of you can go, you should go. It is a truly extraordinary thing. It's amazing.

Yeltsin looked good today.

Q. Did he?

The President. Yes. He's in good spirits, happy. He's got a beautiful place.

Q. Which spirits, exactly?

The President. No spirits. [Laughter] He and his wife and his daughter were there. We all just had a nice visit. It was like old times. But he's in good shape.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:17 p.m. en route from Moscow, Russia, to Kiev, Ukraine. In his remarks, the President referred to former President Yeltsin's wife, Naina, and his daughter, Tatyana Dyachenko. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on Signing a Ukraine-United States Joint Statement in Kiev, Ukraine

June 5, 2000

Thank you very much. Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, leaders of the government, lead-

ers and Members of the Rada, leaders of the court, distinguished citizens. I am delighted to

June 5 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

be back in Ukraine and delighted to be again with President Kuchma to work on our strategic partnership, because the success of Ukraine as a free and prosperous nation is very important to the United States.

Of course, succeeding in the future requires learning from the past. I am very proud and moved to be here today—this is World Environment Day—for this historic announcement by President Kuchma that the final reactor at the Chernobyl nuclear powerplant will be shut down and the entire plant closed forever on December the 15th. This is a hopeful moment. It is also a moment when we remember those who suffered as a result of the accident there.

The President and I agreed that we can grow our economies and protect the environment and public health at the same time, and so we must. I am pleased to announce that the United States will pledge \$78 million for the Chernobyl Shelter Fund to contain radiation from the destroyed reactor, and another \$2 million to expand efforts to improve safety at Ukraine's other nuclear powerplants.

The President and I also discussed his plan for economic reform. He and his team have an economic plan that can put Ukraine on a path towards sustainable growth and much higher living standards. President Kuchma has moved to give his people their own land, to reduce government bureaucracy, to promote entrepreneurship. He has taken recent steps to enhance Ukraine's protection of intellectual

property rights and the rule of law. And these things improve the climate for investment in Ukraine and will attract more investment dollars from the United States and other places across the world.

In that spirit, I am pleased to announce a new 5-year, \$25-million business development program for small and medium-sized businesses in Ukraine to help them participate in the growing economy.

Finally, I want to take another important step today. Because of Ukraine's strong efforts to prevent missile proliferation, I am announcing our decision to eliminate commercial space quotas and open the door to expanded U.S. cooperation with Ukraine's space program. This decision will have a positive, long-term impact on Ukraine's economic prospects, creating more high-tech jobs and positioning Ukraine to be a leader in a cutting-edge area of 21st century commerce. It will also enhance the ability of American companies to compete in space. This represents the kind of high-level partnership our countries can look forward to as we enter the new century together.

Thank you very much, Mr. President. It's been a good day.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:20 p.m. in the White Room at Mariinskiy Palace. In his remarks, he referred to President Leonid Kuchma and Prime Minister Viktor Yushchenko of Ukraine.

Statement on Termination of the Ukraine-United States Commercial Space Launch Agreement

June 5, 2000

I am pleased to announce that today the United States has terminated the commercial space launch trade agreement with Ukraine. This decision eliminates launch quotas and gives U.S. firms greater opportunity to enter into

commercial space launch joint ventures with Ukrainian partners without limit and reflects Ukraine's steadfast commitment to international nonproliferation norms.